

Washington, DC - Congressman Jeff Fortenberry today issued the following statement outlining his thoughts on current federal spending levels and needed reforms within the U.S. budgeting process:

“The American people deserve order in the fiscal house of government. Our government is spending and borrowing too much. This year our federal deficit will approach \$2 trillion. In perspective, \$2 trillion is more than the sum of the entire federal budget at the beginning of the decade. This unrestrained government spending, amid massive stimulus plans and corporate bailouts, is unsustainable. If we do not enact significant budget reforms to alter these spending habits, we will be responsible for leaving an unfair debt burden on our children and generations of Americans to come, undermining economic opportunity in our country. We should start with three commonsense reforms: requiring a balanced budget, allowing the President line-item veto power, and adopting a biennial budget.”

Fortenberry is supporting several budget reform measures that accomplish this goal. He is a cosponsor of H.J. Res. 1, which proposes a balanced budget Amendment to the United States Constitution, H.R. 1294, the *Congressional Accountability and Line-Item Veto Act*, and the *Biennial Budgeting Act*.

- H.J.Res. 1 would amend the United States Constitution to require the President to submit a balanced budget to Congress within three years, that Congress not spend in excess of government revenues, and that a 3/5 majority vote must be cast to increase the debt limit. This proposed legislation would provide an exception in times of national emergency. A constitutional amendment would force Congress to eliminate unnecessary and wasteful spending, balance the budget, and eliminate the federal deficit. Currently, 49 states have a balanced budget requirement.

- H.R. 1294, the *Congressional Accountability and Line-Item Veto Act of 2009*, would return to the President the power to line-item veto any limited tariff benefit or targeted tax benefit, or propose the repeal of any congressional earmark. The Supreme Court declared the line-item veto unconstitutional in 1998, as it ruled that the President must approve or reject any bill in total. Under this legislative proposal, Congress would accordingly have 12 legislative days to review items stripped by the president, and if either chamber voted by simple majority against the line-item veto, it would be reinserted into the bill.

- The *Biennial Budgeting Act* has yet to be reintroduced, but Fortenberry will cosponsor this legislation in the 111th Congress. This proposed legislation would require the President to submit a two-year budget during the first session of Congress, changing the current practice of

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June 09, 2009

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submitting a one-year budget at the beginning of each year. During the first session, Congress would produce a budget resolution and 12 appropriations bills to cover a two-year period. During the second session, Congress would consider any authorization or emergency spending bills, and would engage in oversight of federal agencies.

Fortenberry is a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

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